

Interview with Takako Pagola
Conducted by Linda Byrne for the Providence District History Project
Providence Perspective

February 26, 2008

Linda: Today is February 26, 2008, I am Linda Byrne and I am interviewing Takako Pagola for the Providence Perspective History Project. Please give me your name and address and where we are doing this interview.

Takako: Takako Paloga (actual spelling Pagola) and address is [removed] Burke, Virginia.

Linda: Right now we are at your place of employment; tell us what you do and where you work.

Takako: I am an esthetician at Elle et Lui Hair Salon in Vienna.

Linda: How long have you been doing this type of work?

Takako: 10 years, almost 10 years, yes.

Linda: Tell me about your early life, where you were born and how you came to Fairfax County?

Takako: I was born in Okinawa, Japan; born and raised in Okinawa, Japan and I met my first husband in Okinawa, and I came here to get married, in 1985.

Linda: Was he an American in Okinawa?

Takako: Yes.

Linda: And are you the first person in your family to move to the United States?

Takako: Yes

Linda: Was that a difficult transition for you?

Takako: Yes it was. It was 23 years ago. I didn't speak much English and the place is big. I was raised on an Island and here you need a car to go everywhere. At that time I didn't have a drivers license; it was hard to get use to the lifestyle – the change in the lifestyle.

Linda: Did you receive the training for the work that you do here?

Takako: Yes

Linda: Where did you study?

Takako: Yvonne De Vilar Skin Care in Vienna, Virginia.

Linda: Tell me about your family, your first husband and children.

Takako: I have one daughter.

[Restarted interview in a quieter room after an interruption and a break]

Linda: This interview is being done for the Providence Perspective History Project. It is February 26, 2008. I am at the Elle et Lui Salon in Vienna interviewing Takako Pagola. Would you please give me the correct spelling of your name?

Takako: Takako Paloga.

Linda: And you have been married for?

Takako: Two years.

Linda: Let's start back at the beginning. You were born in?

Takako: Okinawa, Japan and I came here in 1985 to get married. I met my first husband in Okinawa Japan and I came here to marry him and we had one daughter.

Takako: She is almost 20.

Linda: Tell me about your profession

Takako: I am an esthetician for the last 10 years at Elle et Lui Salon in Vienna.

Linda: Can you tell me a little about your profession over the years, what women like to have done and so forth?

Takako: I think more and more they would like to take care of their skin. A lot of people come here for their skin care regiment once a month. And more and more I guess eyebrow wax is the most popular thing to do.

Linda: I have my eyelashes tinted and I found that as a really unique thing that I have done on a regular basis with you and it saves a lot of time and effort. Do you do massage?

Takako: No I don't. I do facials, waxing and makeup.

Linda: In the makeup area do people come to you and you apply the makeup? What do you do?

Takako: Yes, I apply the makeup usually for the bride. We have a lot of bridal parties that come here for hair updo so I apply the makeup for them.

Linda: When you moved here from Japan was it difficult for you? Tell me about the transition in your move.

Takako: The language was the most difficult thing, the food is different but more and more in this area there is a lot of ethnic food so I don't feel any lack of what I had. Twenty years ago there weren't many Asian stores like

we have now. Because the vegetables are different and the cut of the meat is different and it was a little hard for me to fix dinner. Transportation, at that time I did not have a car or a driver's license. Where I grew up there was public transportation everywhere and you could walk anywhere. But here nobody walks on the streets, you have to drive and it was difficult. At that time I didn't have a driver's license and it was hard to get use to the change in lifestyle.

Linda: You have a daughter and she is how old?

Takako: She will be 20 in May.

Linda: I understand that you are married again, that your first husband passed away.

Takako: Yes, my first husband passed away 10 years ago when my daughter was 10.

Linda: That must have been difficult for both of you.

Takako: Yes.

Linda: Did you have any support system here?

Takako: Yes there was a lot of support system here - the Woman's Center in Vienna but I went there only once, if you want to get public support you can get plenty here but I had a lot of friends so I did not have to go through and join any of those kinds of club or whatever they are called. But I hurt and a lot of people suggested I go. Therapy, there are a lot of therapist around here and they specialized for our problem, my daughter's and mine. So yes I used the therapists.

Linda: So that would be for grief therapy?

Takako: Yes.

Linda: Tell me what you would say to someone who might be moving from Japan to Fairfax County Virginia today.

Takako: I think it would be not so difficult today because there is a Japanese channel on TV today, not all day but you can find that. And there are Japanese grocery stores; you see lots of Japanese restaurants, not like 20 some years ago. I think it would be easier; but I like Fairfax County, Virginia because there are so many races and culture is mixed around here. I really like it.

Linda: Is there anything else you can tell me about Fairfax County that would be good for incoming people, people that might be moving here even if they were just relocating within the United States.

Takako: In Fairfax County? It is a great place but it is too crowded and a lot of traffic. I don't know if a lot of people would want to be here; and it is expensive too.

Linda: Is there anything in your profession that you see coming up in the future as far as the trends for women? For instance I am thinking about aging, like myself, as we get older there are certain regiments that are coming in, like creams or age defying creams that women will be doing.

Takako: I would say moisturize your skin using good moisturizer, cleansing is very important and give yourself a little massage and I think that will maintain your skin.

Linda: Was it difficult for your family in Japan for you to come to the United States, so far away, and for you to leave your family.

Takako: Yes, it was difficult, and I am the only one who is here, at the time my parents thought they would not see me very often but I have been going back almost every year so, and I talk on the phone on a monthly basis so after a year past , I think they felt okay. They also came to visit here and that made my parents comfortable.

Linda: That is good.

Linda: I thank you very much for this interview. Can you think of anything else that we might want to put into this?

Takako: No.

Linda: I thank you very much.